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ERGA OMNES: METAPHORS AND CONSUMERIST IDEOLOGY

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Abstract: This study provides an explorative framework for consumerism understood as an ideological construct. Applying a diversity of methods on a corpus of car commercials, we connect valorization strategies and design categories. Consumerist ideology emerges in the dynamic interaction between valorization strategies and design categories. We identify metaphorical ways of conceptualizing the products and the ideological underpinnings motivating consumer's purchase decisions by creating a classification of different styles of consumption.

Key words: consumerism, critical metaphor analysis, ideology, metaphor, TV commercial.

1. Introduction

Advertising a product has been recently studied as an act of storytelling that situates the consumer in a particular narrative from the perspective of the semiotics of consumerism (cf. e.g., Rossolatos 2018; Taupin 2019). At the same time, the product has been viewed as the result of an active combination of form and function (cf. Kumar & Noble 2016). In this article we argue that by analyzing both the consumers' strategies according to Floch's valorization strategies (1992) and the products' form and function according to Norman's design categories (2004; 2013). We can identify the ideological underpinnings of

motivating consumers' purchase decisions. We show how consumerism is understood as a discourse created by the interaction between consumers' goals and products' affordances. In order to relate both constituents of consumerism's discourse, we conducted a comparative study of the verbalizations of native speakers of Italian and English as they reacted to car commercials. Those verbalizations were the vehicle for underlying metaphors that were linked to the valorization strategies Floch (1992) and design categories (Norman 2004; 2013). Ultimately, we were able to define styles of consumption that are connected to the ideological construct of consumerism. Our perspective is integrative and interdisciplinary, and it follows the paradigms of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) developed within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), an interdisciplinary perspective to the study of discourse. CDA considers language and communication as a form of social practice and focuses on the discovery of the ideology in and behind text, speech, and multimodal interactions (Fairclough 2013; Machin & Van Leeuwen 2016; Morozova 2017; Poppi 2018; Poppi & Urios-Aparisi 2019). What characterizes CMA is the assumption that human conceptualization – largely structured around conceptual metaphors (Lakoff 1994; Lakoff & Johnson 1999; Poppi & Urios-Aparisi 2019) – underlies construal operations, which are ideological in nature (Hart 2008; Poppi 2018).

After defining consumerism in terms of an ideology that connects products' properties to the ways the product is presented in the medium of advertising, we move to explain (1) which metaphors verbalized in response to car commercials can be referred to consumerism and (2) how different metaphors can shed light on different dimensions of consumerism. As we show, consumerism should not be considered as a unitary phenomenon but as a constellation of different systems of values and representations.

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2. Consumerism and ideology

The study of consumerism is essentially a problem of constitutive aspects. According to Poppi (2017), the plurality of meanings and needs constitutes the psychological foundation of consumerism and has been related to two main dimensions: (1) the *design categories* of the product that create consumerist meanings and needs and (2) the *valorization strategies* on the product mediated via advertising. Regarding the design of the products, Alvensleben and Meier (1990) showed that the psychological dimensions of a product's purchase – selection and choice – are motivated by the properties and image of the product itself (see also De Angelis et al. 2017). Here, the role of meanings and needs in affecting products' selection and choice moves around the notion of design, a set of requirements into a specification, and the material properties of an artifact (Chapman 2015; Mourey et al. 2017; Ulrich & Pearson 1998).

Norman (2004; 2013) connects patterns of products' properties to the emotional responses they produce and created a classification of products accordingly. Norman's classification assumes that design influences people's information processing and decision-making (see also Ho & Siu 2012; Maniatis 2016; Triberti et al. 2017). The products are distributed into the visceral, behavioural, and reflective categories. He describes products that belong to the *visceral* category as concerned with appearances since they "cause an immediate visceral reaction" (Norman 2004: 64). *Behavioural* products deal with the pleasure that comes from their use and from their effectiveness (ibid., 5). *Reflective* products can reflect self-image, personal satisfaction, and the memories of the consumer (ibid., 39). Therefore, design categories include a wide range of peoples' individual ways of being and their motivation to buy products. People who decide to buy product X because of its appearance (Visceral design) have different values, beliefs, and motivations than a consumer who wants to buy product Y because of its functionality (Behavioural design).

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Floch (1992) defines and identifies four *valorization strategies* that advertising can use to promote products as they represent specific sets of meanings and needs. The *practical valorization* integrates strategies related to the experience of use and usefulness of a product, such as comfort, reliability, and functionality. The *utopic valorization* includes higher level features of the product as they reflect dimensions of consumers' self, such as identity, personality, memories, and personal satisfaction, but also traditions and cultural backgrounds (see also Bianchi 2011; Heilbrunn 2015). The term *critical valorization* includes strategies that involve a detailed examination of the products and their features such as convenience, quality-price correlation, analysis of cost and benefits and even its impact in relation to critical aspects of the purchase itself. Conversely, *ludic valorization* emphasizes all those non-practical features that are represented by refinement, luxury, and prestige (see Codeluppi 2013: 76).

In the dominating globalized economic system of neoliberal capitalism, consumerism is a central phenomenon. Wolff (2006) explains it as a way of compensating workers as the ideological apparatus of the state raises the levels of exploitation. James and Scerri identify consumerism as part of the underlying values of personal autonomy and, particularly of what they identify as "projective individualism" (2012: 227). Design categories and valorization strategies integrate important elements of what it means to consume a product. On the one hand, the product's features afford its consumption on the part of the buyer. On the other hand, the valorization the consumer projects onto the product is partly due to the affordances of the product itself. Our contention is that consumers acquire products based on those features and those features are predetermined by the ideological framework of consumerism.

As mentioned above, CDA's paradigms focus on how ideologies determine the underlying discourses of political or socio-cultural realities such as consumerism. From the early stages of this discipline, Fairclough (1989: 119) suggested that in order to study ideologies

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we can answer the question "which metaphors are used?" Fairclough's views have merged with studies on metaphor in cognition. According to CDA, metaphor is a cognitive process that can be identified in a variety of linguistic items. It is a matter of thought while the "metaphorical expression" is its linguistic instantiation. Conceptual metaphor is formed by two elements that generally include an abstract domain (the *target*) and a more concrete and familiar domain (the *source*). In some cases, several metaphorical expressions can be identified with one underlying metaphor as entities, qualities, and functions (Lakoff 1993).

Metaphor allows one to associate a wide number of source domains with the same target domain and in any source domain there is a set of relevant information and connotations that frame how we make sense of the target domain (Kövecses 2018). As Hart (2018: 280) says, "[…] metaphor is a cognitive-semiotic operation [...] in which a source frame is mobilized to provide a template for sense-making inside a target frame, leading to particular framing effects." Metaphors can affect the way people think (Beaty et al. 2017) and they interact within social and cultural contexts (Kövecses 2015; Landau et al. 2010; Lerche et al. 2018).

CMA puts forth the view that metaphors embody, represent, and construct ideologies in discourse (Charteris-Black 2006; Goatly 2007; Lazar 2009). Metaphors evoke cognitive frames or ideological constructs that remain largely under the level of awareness (cf. Charteris-Black 2004; 2012; Goatly 2007). The use of alternative metaphors may produce different effects on the recipient's views (Charteris-Black 2012). As Semino (2008: 91) puts it, metaphor "has consequences for how a particular issue is 'framed' or structured [...] what evaluative and emotional associations are triggered, what courses of action seem to be possible and so on". Ideology is understood according to Charteris-Black (2011: 21-22) as "a coherent set of ideas and beliefs adhered to by a group of people that provides an organized and systematic representation of the world about which they can agree".

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As Freathy and Thomas (2015) state, in marketing research, metaphors authenticate socio-political as well as economic meaning. Metaphor has never been applied directly to the notion of consumerism and some contributions have tried to highlight how related domains of market, finance, currency, and money can be reduced to a series of conceptualizations that characterize media discourse (see Alejo 2010; Kharchenkova 2018; Poppi 2017; Wang et al. 2013). Consumerism is generally regarded as a way to refer to consumption but viewing consumerism as an ideological construct has been highly debated (see Sklair 2010). McGregor (2008: 545-52) proposes that consumerism represents a set of values and beliefs. According to Sklair (2010: 136), consumerism is a set of beliefs and values "intended to make people believe that human worth is best ensured [...] in terms of our consumption and possessions". As consumerism refers to the wide socio-economic system of capitalist globalization, it can hardly be conceived as a unitary phenomenon. Jung (2010: 439) suggests that consumerism is a "kaleidoscopic" notion, an umbrella term that reflects different meanings and, in this sense, Gabriel and Lang (1995) show how consumerism plays different roles and that these roles are affected by individual meanings and needs. In order to identify the ideological framework and its main metaphors, we have implemented two operational steps we will discuss in the following section.

3. Methodology

We have taken the following steps. First, we identify the metaphors found in texts elicited through a "think aloud" task. Secondly, we connect those metaphors within ideological frames by conducting a Likert interview with native speakers. Our corpus is composed of twenty TV commercials broadcast in England and Italy in the language of the country promoting the most sold cars during the biennium 2007–2008 and 2011–2012[1]. The decision to use this particular biennial is based on a set of data used for an analysis on the "Great Recession" of 2008 on conceptual variation (Poppi 2017), an event that has been widely considered to have affected the perception of consumerism (Assadourian 2010;

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Flatters & Willmott 2009). These commercials were retrieved from web sources[2] and searches on YouTube and Bing.

The participants were 30 university students (aged 22-32), 15 from Italy and 15 from the UK, equally divided between genders. We were interested in recruiting participants with little knowledge about cars to avoid any possible interference with their interpretations of the TV commercials. Each potential participant was preliminarily asked to rate – using a 7-point Likert scale – their 'car world knowledge'[3]. Only those people reporting a score below 3 were included in the study. These criteria are intended to guarantee that the participants have a minimum degree of familiarity with both cars and TV commercials, as indicated by the threshold value of 3; the candidates scoring below it denote a low level of knowledge. The 'car world knowledge' index denoted how much participants knew about cars and car brands, and the 'TV viewing frequency' could indicate that the participants who watched TV less often and would therefore be likely to have more limited knowledge of TV commercials.

In our "think aloud" task participants had to watch TV commercials and verbalize their thoughts about them. This approach – already used in research in visual and multimodal metaphors (see Bort-Mir et. al 2020; Frøkjær & Hornbæk 2008; Poppi et. al 2020; Šorm & Steen 2013) – allows for the collection of verbalizations about a certain stimulus and to identify the metaphor used by the participants in the transcription of the verbalization itself. In order to reduce the impact of 'out of context' thoughts, we decided to ask subjects *not* to generally verbalize their thoughts about the TV commercials, but to verbalize their thoughts about a series of conceptual categories (target domains), such as the PRODUCT, the BUYER, the ACT OF BUYING, the REASON FOR BUYING, and the FEELINGS or EMOTIONS aroused by the purchase of the product[4]. This strategy leaves the subjects with a considerable level of autonomy in expressing their thoughts, but, at the same time, it subtly limits the range of verbalizations evoked by the viewing of those commercials.

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While each participant was exposed to commercials belonging to both periods, we decided that participants would only view commercials in their native language in order to make any interpretation as precise as possible and to avoid any bias derived from a lack of understanding. For this reason, we decided to use a total of 4 commercials (2 for the biennium 2007–2008 and 2 for the biennium 2011–2012) as the setting of the analysis. Each condition was presented to each participant in a random order, but each participant analyzed 2 commercials for the 2007–2008 condition and 2 for the 2011–2012 condition.

Once we selected the relevant utterances of the "think aloud" task, we codified metaphor domains found in the data collected. The process of coding was conducted by two independent scholars. The source domain was chosen only in case of agreement between the two coders; otherwise, the metaphor was placed in the residual category (Other). We used the MIPVU protocol mentioned above (Steen et. al 2010) to elicit metaphorically related words and the Master Metaphor List (Lakoff et al. 1991) to label source domains.

In the second step of our research, we wanted to relate multiple dimensions of the car including features, aspects, and functions of cars to the styles of consumptions in order to produce the conceptual dimensions. First, the two authors of the present contribution listed a series of features, aspects, and functions of cars following the description of the content of the styles of consumption. We collected 42 entries. Then, a group of eight scholars were asked to rate – using a 7-point Likert scale – how these entries would fit within the description of styles of consumption. For instance: "Considering the description of the style of consumption X, how much would you rate the entry (x) as pertinent or compatible with it?" From the rating of the 7-point Likert scale, we have decided to consider as conceptual dimensions only those 23 entries that obtained a rating average higher than 5.

In order to design a procedure to link the metaphor conveyed by the participants and the conceptual domains, we decided to create three operative criteria based on the MIPVU

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protocol (see Steen et al. 2010), a protocol intended to establish methodological criteria to maximize the validity of the operation. The criteria we followed are (i) the *direct association*, (ii) an indirect criterion, called *conceptual equivalence*, and (iii) a more interpretative approach, which we have named *conceptual interpretation*. Those operative expedients establish a process to define the two domains involved in the metaphorical mapping and consequently they help maximize the validity of the interpretation.

The interpretation was conducted by the first author and one research assistant. Considering that the process of interpretation presents a certain level of subjectivity, we have decided that when a metaphor is too ambiguous to fit into a single valorization or into a particular design category. However, when the researchers did not find any visible connection between strategies of valorization, design categories and a metaphor in an advert, the metaphor was considered as *neutral* and therefore was excluded from the analysis.

4. Results

Next, we summarize the findings of both the "think aloud" task and the study connecting metaphor occurrence, design categories and valorization strategies. As mentioned above, the first task gives us the data to identify the main source domains. The second analysis helps us connect those domains to the corresponding design category and valorization strategy. These results will lead to further our understanding of the ideological underpinnings of consumerist discourse.

4.1 "Think aloud" task

In the "think aloud" task, we identified 971 utterances (10681 words) from a corpus of 120 verbalizations. In total, we found 8 source domain categories and one residual category ("Other") for a total of 112 metaphorically related words (59 ENG and 53 ITA). We distributed the source domains in broader categories: 1) Feeling and Personality, 2)

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Art and Artefacts, 3) People, 4) Nature and Animals, 5) Fight and Combat, 6) Actions and Dynamics, 7) Health, 8) Commodities. In 9) Other, the 'residual' category, we included all those source domains that cannot be placed into a precise category when we could not agree on one single labelling, although they have not been included in the results.

Every single source domain identified in the corpus with the instances that represent those source domains, the number of times each metaphor as well as some representative examples are to be represented in a table in the discussion section below. The source domains identified in the corpus of TV commercials refer to their occurrence within metaphors and to some examples that help to illustrate their application. Although the target domain in advertising has been shown to be the advertised product (see Forceville 2002), we have included other dimensions that are strictly related to the product itself. We can say that the BUYER, the BUYER'S IDENTITY or EXPERIENCE FOR DRIVING, BUYING THE CAR can also be the target of a series of domains as we will see in Table 2 (see Appendix).

Further, we distributed the source domains in broader categories: 1) Feeling and Personality, 2) Art and Artefacts, 3) People, 4) Nature and Animals, 5) Fight and Combat, 6) Actions and Dynamics, 7) Health, 8) Commodities, and, as mentioned above we have included 9) *Other* section when we could not agree on one single labelling and, although we have included this section in Table 1 in the Appendix, they have not been included in the results.

4.2 Results: Metaphor occurrence, design categories and valorization strategies

In this section, we connect the metaphors identified above with valorization strategies and design categories. We found that the source domains we have just identified can be connected to both strategies and design categories. To create a link between the high order metaphors (Lakoff 1993), design categories, and valorization strategies, we analyze the

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nature of the products bearing in mind the patterns of the product's properties (design typology) and the image emerging from the processes of advertising and promotion (strategies of valorization). We apply the three criteria defined by MIVUP as mentioned above. According to the *direct criterion* method we can connect a source domain in metaphor particular design categories and valorization strategies. For instance, if, from the verbalization of a TV commercial, the metaphor FORD FIESTA IS BEING HAPPY emerges in the data collected, the source BEING HAPPY can be related to the utopic valorization strategy (U) and the reflective design category (R). Second, if a participant verbalizes a metaphor that could be indirectly considered as an expression of a conceptual category, we speak in terms of *conceptual equivalence*. If a verbalization reports THE LANCIA Y IS A COUCH, the source domain COUCH was considered as the expression of the practical valorization (P) and the behavioural valorization (B) since COUCH can be metonymically associated with the quality of comfort associated with that product. Finally, the *conceptual interpretation* criterion applies where there are no evident semantic clues. In this case, we prefer to maximize the coherence between the meaning and the conceptual categories.

The corpus of TV commercials representing cars is fundamental in shaping the combination of patterns of properties of a product and the way this type of product is promoted.

5. Discussion

The metaphors we have identified belong to a great range of areas, but the underlying, more general, metaphor conceptualization is CAR IS PERSON. This metaphor is motivated by the metonymic relationship between the car and its user and creator. In this discussion, we analyze the domains just identified as they can evoke the personalization of the car as an anthropocentric view of the world framing the discourse of consumerism.

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5.1 Feelings and personality

Source domains about feelings and personality include (i) the expression of emotional or character traits of the car owners and (ii) the anticipation of the feelings that the owners can have while driving the car. The strategy of relating cars and their experiences to such domains can be connected to self-image, to make manifest identity traits, memories, and experiences.

The informants described the experience of a car in terms of love, feeling, and emotions ("love," "strong"). These terms are clearly subsumed within the domains of EMOTIONS. In terms of Floch's valorization strategies, it can be situated within the Utopic strategy. According to the reflective design category, the metaphor evokes the emotional dimensions of the act of consuming. The product reflects a desire or a need to be fulfilled and the commercial represents the product as meeting those needs and desires.

5.2 Art and artefacts

The source domain MUSICIAN combines two central features in the way cars are conceptualized. First, a car and a musician perform by combining different elements and, secondly, the world of classical music is generally associated with positive and prestigious elements such as high culture, sophistication, or good taste. As a metaphor, it frames the product both as high-end and sophisticated, but also the car's technology and performance. Such meanings are found in colloquial expressions, in which a motor can be described as "well-tuned" or the motor can be "quiet" in a way that the parts work in perfect "harmony". All these features are related to non-utilitarian and aesthetic ideas such as taste and style. Within the framework of consumerism, the car identifies with the Visceral design and possibly with two strategies: the Ludic valorization or the Utopic valorization strategy. The image of the car emphasizes non-practical features while at the same time it can endow the consumers with positive social values such as wealth, prestige, and high culture.

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5.3 People

The 'People' category is expected within the anthropocentric worldview, central in Western civilization. The car's function as a tool for movement created and utilized by human beings lends both domains CAR and PEOPLE metonymic closeness. Some of the instances found in our corpus focus on close relationships such as Friend (3), Relative (1), or Assistant (2). It can also relate to particular professions Stylist (1) or Actor (1). It is also associated with the domain Woman (3) in general.

As in the "Arts and artefacts category," the "People category" can be associated with multiple strategies and design categories. On one hand, people's roles such as assistant or relationships such as friend or relative connect the car to practical properties of a product (comfort, reliability, ease of use, and performance). The properties identified with this category are the practical valorization and the behavioural design and both stress the functional aspect of the car. On the other hand, such domains are related to familiarity, closeness, or identity in connections to family relations or ideals of beauty, sexual appeal, or social prestige. In this case, the categories are fuzzy, and the category "People" can have a diversity of values. On the one hand, it can show the product in a practical way as it is depicted as useful, comfortable; it can be identified with the utopic valorization as identity or personality can be associated with family belonging and identity. Finally, it can evoke different design categories: visceral, behavioural, or reflective depending on which kind of this category is highlighted.

5.4 Nature and animals

Animals and natural elements can create similar frameworks in relation to the strategies of valorization or the design categories. The meanings are mostly associated with stereotypical views of the animals, which are traditionally endowed with a particular feature. For instance, dogs are prototypically faithful and reliable, or horses are freedom searching animals, especially wild horses. Other animals can be attractive for their

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colours, shapes, or other features that can be highlighted using the camerawork or particular references in the text.

In the case of the domain DOG, the highlighted feature is companionship and reliability. Both features can represent the technical features of the car, but also connect the car to the consumer's emotional attachment to pets. Similarly, WILD HORSE has a range of meanings often present in films, art, and literature and it is generally associated with the act of galloping in a way that is apparently out of control. The image highlights speed and strength, both features of sport cars in particular. At the same time, that meaning is associated with concepts like freedom, cinematic myths like the wild west that the consumer would be able to associate with figures like the cowboy or the outlaw. In this sense, the source domain is used to represent certain practical aspects (i.e., as reliable as a DOG) or to make manifest traits of identity (as indomitable as a WILD HORSE).

5.5 Fight and combat

This kind of source domain emphasizes a specific range of properties relating to the safety and safety features of a car. Therefore, the metaphors associated with this source domain generally fall within the Practical design category and the behavioural valorization strategy. Security is one of the conceptual domains that is related to this style. The cars can be expressed through the domains of SHIELD, BUNKER, and ARMOUR. Representations of these domains are generally metonymical as they are generally represented by subdomains such as SHIELD, BUNKER, and ARMOUR.

5.6 Actions and dynamics

The central idea behind this group of source domains consists of associating the cars with a series of experiences such as TIME TRAVELLING, RISKING LIFE, WINNING, etc. that serve to endow the car with further meanings. Considering that the association of these experiences does not reflect any particular or concrete feature or part of the car itself, the

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role of these source domains is to emphasize general experiences of driving or owning the car. In this sense, those domains are associated with the Utopic valorization strategy and the Reflective design category. At the same time, they are related to concepts such as human emotion and car prestige that are projected onto the user's social persona. Such features can fall within the Ludic design category and Visceral valorization strategy since RISKING LIFE provokes physical reactions such as exhilaration and high adrenaline associated with emotions and feelings generally considered positive such as exhilaration, excitement, and happiness. It is also connected to certain lifestyles, which are also considered prestigious such as adventure and thrill-seeking, etc.

5.7 Health

This source type includes a small category of source domains with specific references to objects such as STIMULANTS, DRUGS, and TRANQUILIZERS. The role of using these source domains serves to describe physical sensations that the car, or its relevant experiences, induce. In this sense, the role played by HEALTH is to establish a deep connection between the cars and the owners, a connection that also assumes the point of view of a physical connection. In a similar way to the 'Action and Dynamics' source type, the role of STIMULANTS, DRUGS, and TRANQUILIZERS is also to convey some feelings and moods.

5.8 Commodities

'Commodities' refers to a wide group of source domains that associate cars with other commodities. The function of creating such a conceptualization serves either to highlight certain non-practical features of the cars (i.e., as elegant as a TUXEDO) or to highlight the sharing of emotional and value features (i.e., this car is a fundamental and valuable commodity like a TV).

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Those features: elegance or value and essential features of the TV are related to their respective styles of consumption through the indirect criterion and because of the interpretative criterion, since being essential can only be interpreted as a trait of personality that a car conveys.

While elegance is certainly a distinguishing feature of the TUXEDO (as being reliable is for a DOG), the TV-domain is too rich in terms of meaning to be reduced to some typical aspects. Therefore, the conceptual interpretation criterion happens where there are no evident semantic clues, and each specific source domain is interpreted in order to maximize the coherence between its meaning and the conceptual categories.

5.9 Other (residual category)

This group of source domains refers to a wide group of conceptualizations that can hardly be reduced to a single category. In this group, we find every style of consumption and the three operative criteria. For instance, while some source domains reflect the Practical-behavioural style because of the comfort that a car conveys (i.e. as comfortable as a ROOM); others are associated with self-image and tradition as per the Utopic-Reflective style (i.e., conveying general states such as POWER), some convey Critical aspects (i.e. functional to saving money like a MONEY SAVER and higher values such as FREEDOM) or related to aesthetic and social impacts as per the Ludic-Visceral style (i.e., seductive and powerful like a DEVIL). As far as the operative criteria are concerned, POWER refers to the performance of the car by the direct relation between POWER and performance, other source domains like ROOM and MONEY refer to comfort and the functionality of saving money through the indirect expression of conceptual categories and DEVIL/ANGEL is related to the car by an interpretation of the conceptual dimensions of the source domains in relation to the context that the commercial presents.

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6. Conclusion

The products' image as represented in the commercials we have analyzed is a complex interaction of design, image in the context of advertising and cognition. Design integrates form and function. Image includes a variety of elements such as genre and socio-cultural factors such as identity and self-image. Cognition is a complex network, which involves different kinds of knowledge: knowledge about visual and multimodal codes, social, cultural and interactional norms, and other generic conventions. The design categories and strategies of valorization define the conceptual content and allow the definition of styles of consumption. Although the present research is still in the preliminary stages, we have reached some conclusions as to which styles of consumption the consumers identify more often in those commercials.

Advertising contemplates the positioning of a certain product within a system of needs and meanings that motivate the purchase. Advertising plays a crucial role in showing design properties and induces consumerist meanings and needs. Positioning means defining a conceptual space made by needs and meanings, in which elements such as signs, symbols, memories, and experiences are related to a product. In order to capture the different ways, in which products can be represented by different conceptual spaces, consumerism can be dismantled into design categories and valorization strategies not only to capture as many psychological, semiotic, and communicative aspects of such a complex notion but also because of the common foundations of the two main dimensions. Observing the content of design categories with valorization strategies, it is possible to shed light as to how the properties of the products and the way they are promoted overlap. For instance, the behavioural products consider psychological aspects that come from the use, as their effectiveness similarly, practical valorization describes strategies that aim to underline the experience of use, as the usefulness of a product.

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Combining Norman's design categories and Foch's valorization strategies we can understand that consumption differs according to different styles including the Practical-Behavioural style, the Utopic-Reflective style, the Critical style, and the Ludic-Visceral style. The Practical-Behavioural style of consumption would appeal to those who value the practical properties of a product, such as comfort, reliability, ease of use and performance. These properties are practical and can generally be quantified. According to the Utopic-Reflective style, consumers are influenced by the need to express their self-image, to make manifest traits of their identity, their memories, and experiences. This kind of style of consumption is rooted in the personality of the consumer and it establishes a deep connection between the user and the product. The Critical style is associated with the evaluation of non-existential aspects, such as convenience, analysis of cost and benefits. Interestingly, this decision does not rely on the object per se, but it represents the result of a rational and careful examination of the product. Finally, according to the Ludic-Visceral style, the properties of a product and its image can be considered as opposed to the ones described in the Practical-Behavioural dimension. In this case, a purchase is determined by non-utilitarian reasons, such as the prestige of the brand, the image of luxury, the design, and all those properties that produce a certain social impact.

These four styles of consumption can be regarded as motivational factors that induce people to buy certain products because of their pattern of properties (design typology) or because of the image emerging from processes of advertising and promotion (strategies of valorization). The strategies of valorization present analogous content with the typologies of design described. Specifically, the practical strategy of valorization holds a similarity to the behavioural typology of design, as both share a focus on the 'experience of use' and the 'functionality' of a product. The styles of consumption are also construed by both the properties of the objects that induce people to purchase them and the semiotic strategies used by advertisers in order to promote these objects. They can also be related to the different features by relating them to the categories listed in Table 3 (see Appendix).

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After a recursive process of operationalization from TV commercials to styles of consumption and back, the four styles of consumption have been defined by a series of entities that relate to different kinds of knowledge and experience. While the main features summarize the content of each style, the conceptual domains create a base to allow for metaphorical mappings between the domains. Some conceptual domains reflect the main aspects of each style of consumption. For instance, the practical-behavioural style presents some of the main practical aspects that can characterize a car. The utopic-reflective style generally relates to the representation of personality traits. 'Tradition' and 'innovation' represent two diametrically opposed approaches toward consumption, one that can refer to a conservative view of the world, and the other that is innovative and more directed towards the future.

Interestingly, although the TV car commercials belong to two different countries (Italy and the United Kingdom) and to two different periods (2007–2008 and 2011–2012), the predominating styles of consumption were mostly connected to prestige features associated with the product or the emotional connections. Fewer cases highlight the utilitarian features related to buying that kind of car and even less were associated with critical values such as cost/benefit, consumption, or other practical features.

In the dominant set of values and ideas related to the TV car commercials we analyzed, consumers are influenced by the need to express their self-image, to make manifest traits of their identity, their memories and experiences and by non-utilitarian reasons, such as the prestige of the brand, the image of luxury, the design, and all those properties that produce a certain social impact. We have seen that more practical aspects such as those described by the Practical-behavioural styles (e.g., comfort, reliability) or references to higher values and non-existential aspects (e.g., convenience) do not represent the way consumerism generally operates. In other words, metaphors help to convey meanings and associations that establish a deep connection between the user and the product rather than

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expressing practicality. These findings are very much in line with Kumar & Noble's (2016) identification of the self-expressive dimensions of the design properties of an object. Their qualitative study shows how product design follows the "traditional form and function characterization of product design. However, a third major self-expressive dimension that includes two distinct value sub-dimensions (social and altruistic) also emerged" (ibid., 614).

The source domain frames consumerism by situating the act of buying a product as an extension of the inherently human sphere of activities, very much like eating, drinking, having sexual relations, or expressing or experiencing emotions. The styles of the styles of consumption highlight the dominating role of emotions as the main motivation for consumption rather than other decision-making processes. Consumerism determines our decision-making as it integrates the design affordances of the product, our knowledge about the object, and its context of use, the underlying motivations for use and the valorization strategies used by advertising to promote products as they represent specific sets of wants and needs. It is dynamic and multifaceted.

The contributions of this paper are twofold. On the one hand, we have defined operative criteria in order to maximize the coherence between the two domains. We have also related metaphors to ideological content through definitions and methods. However, both the operative definitions to operationalize an ideological construction and the methods to link it to metaphors should be constantly revised and refined, and further tested.

First, only the genre of TV commercials was included in the data, which stimulated the strong association with the ideology of consumerism. It would be useful to include other types of data that are not prone to the association with consumerism in future studies to see how consumerism works through metaphor in other (social) contexts. Although car advertisements are particularly prone to personify their product, further analysis is needed

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to understand whether it plays a central role in conceptualizing other products. Slight changes in any of those constituents can change the ideological framework of the product and the act of consuming. A possible area with which to compare these results would be "green consumerism" and "critical consumerism". These types of consumerism seem to have the same properties of more general consumerism but differ in their actual properties that motivate the purchase (e.g., sustainability).

Second, consumerism as an ideology can be researched from both the consumers' and the advertisers' perspectives. This study pays special attention to the consumers' perspective, while in further studies more attention should be paid to the advertisers' consumerism and the interaction between both. Finally, the study may need more intricate improvements in terms of the theoretical and methodological framework when analyzing metaphors in conversations where metaphors are used and interpreted in a much more interactive and hence dynamic way in situated contexts.

Notes

1. For details about the selected TV commercials see: https://www.smmt.co.uk/vehicle-data/ and https://forum.quattroruote.it/threads/classifiche-di-vendita-in-italia-dal-1967-a-oggi.61198/

2. List of TV commercials: https://tvaddb.com/

3. ("How much do you know about cars and car brands?": 0: No Knowledge to 7: Expert knowledge) and 'TV viewing frequency' ("Among all the media, how often do you watch TV?": 0-Never to 7-Always).

4. The decision to use a series of target domains as triggers for the metaphor production assumes that TV commercials, beyond conveying meanings related to the product to promote, inevitably present other content that is indirectly related to the product itself. These dimensions can be, for instance, the buyer image, causes/emotions for buying, etc.

In this sense, the decision to use similar target domains is coherent with the nature of the TV commercials and their function.

List of abbreviations

CDA = Critical Discourse Analysis

CMA = Critical Metaphor Analysis

ENG = English

ITA = Italian

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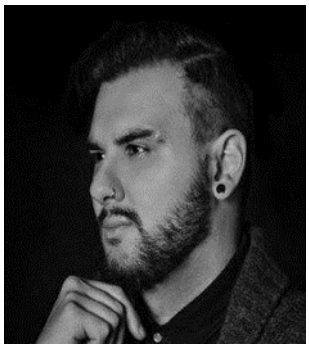	*name:*	**Fabio I.M. Poppi**
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Résumé

The present study provides an explorative framework for the metaphorical conceptualization of consumerism by the analysis of TV commercials broadcast in England and Italy. We present the results of a two-step research. In the first step informants from Italy and United Kingdom performed a "think aloud" task in order to elicit how people conceptualize different aspects of consumerist practices. The second step was identifying underlying metaphors and connecting those metaphors with valorization strategies and design categories. Our conclusion shows that a series of styles of consumption can be identified to define consumerism, namely: The Practical-Behavioural style, the Utopic-Reflective style, the Critical, and the Ludic-Visceral one. These styles of consumption are a combination of strategies of valorization that define the consumers' attitudes and the products' design categories – design typologies – that define the features afforded by the product to the consumer. These four styles of consumption can be regarded as motivational factors that induce people to buy certain products because of their pattern of properties (design typology) or because of the image emerging from processes of advertising and promotion (strategies of valorization). Applying principles from Critical Metaphor Analysis consumerism is defined by patterns of metaphors that evoke particular ideological frameworks, that are coherent sets of ideas and beliefs that

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provides an organized and systematic representation of the world. Those frameworks highlight the anthropomorphic features of the products and favour emotional and social values over practical and critical ones. In this contribution, consumerism seems to determine our decision-making as it integrates the design affordances of the product, our knowledge about the object and its context of use, the underlying motivations for use, and the valorization strategies used by advertising to promote products as they represent specific sets of wants and needs.

Key words: consumerism, critical metaphor analysis, ideology, metaphor, TV commercial.

Appendix

Table 1. Source domains and occurrence of metaphorically related words

Source domains categories	Metaphor occurrence	Examples
Feeling and Personality (19)	Feeling (4) Falling (Being) In Love (2) Mood (2) Being Strong (2) Joy (3) Friendship (1) Appreciating/Loving A Country (2) Making Love (3)	A Fiesta is joy, a feeling of joy" (FIESTA IS JOY) "Driving a 207 is like falling in love, I'd say" (DRIVING A 207 IS FALLING IN LOVE)
Art and Artefacts (24)	Music/Song (4) Art (2) Artwork/Piece Of Art (3) Artist (2) Musician (3) Monument (2) Musical instruments (8)	"Then a Focus is a musical instrument, indeed" (A FOCUS IS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT) "A CORSA is complex, I, I don't know, it's a piece of contemporary art" (A CORSA IS A PIECE OF ART)
People (11)	Friend (3) Relative (1) Assistant (2) Woman (3) Stylist (1)	"a FIESTA will never let you down, like a friend" (FIESTA IS A FRIEND) "[FOCUS] it's like an assistant, you can ask and…it's at your service" (FOCUS IS AN ASSISTANT)

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	Actor (1)	
Nature and Animals (7)	Ladybug (3) Horse (1) Rainbow (1) Nest (1) Dog (1)	"A Corsa is a nest, it's for the insects you see" (CORSA IS A NEST) "La Punto è da domare, come un cavallo di razza, non è per tutti diciamo" "A Punto is something to tame, it's like a purebred horse, it's not for everyone let's say" (A PUNTO IS A HORSE)
Fight and Combat (5)	Shield (2) Bunker (1) Armour (2)	"A Focus is a shield, I mean against the dangers of driving, you know, a shield to be safe" (A FOCUS IS A SHIELD) "[Focus] It's a shield, or armour for the driver." (A FOCUS IS A SHIELD/ARMOUR)
Actions and Dynamics (9)	Risking Life (2) Time Travelling (1) Winning (3) Living A Day (2) Being Special (1)	"Driving a Corsa is like risking your life, it's the same thing, the same emotions, the adrenaline and and…things like that" (DRIVING A 'CORSA' IS RISKING YOUR LIFE) "Se guidi questa macchina viaggi nel tempo" / "If you drive this car you travel through time") (DRIVING A 'FIESTA' IS TIME TRAVELING)
Health (7)	Stimulant (3) Drug (2) Tranquilizer (2)	"From the motto you understand that the 207 is a stimulant, like Viagra" (THE 207 IS A (SEXUAL) STIMULANT) "Can you be addicted to a car [Golf]? Well, yes, I think so and that is the meaning of the ad" (A GOLF IS A DRUG)
Commodities (14)	TV (5) Suit/Tuxedo (3) Laundry Machine (2) Swimming Pool (1) Puppet/Doll (3)	"The Fiesta is a TV, really a TV, I mean, see the images?" (A FIESTA IS A TELEVISION SET) "I'd say a Golf is like a very cool suit, a suit, not something for…pretenders, great quality stuff" (A GOLF IS A SUIT)
Other (19)	Devil/Angel (2) Paradise (2) Right (3) Money Saver (2) Room (1) Time/Historical Period (2) Freedom (2) Power (2) Human Sense (2) Instinct (1)	"A Golf is a kind of power that changes things, even your life" (A GOLF IS POWER) "A Focus is your sight, your senses" (A FOCUS IS A SIGHT, combined with UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING)

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Table 2. Source domains in relation to the Design categories and Valorization strategies

Source domains	Metaphor occurrence	Norman's design categories	Floch's valorization strategies	Total
Feeling and Personality (19)	Feeling (4) Falling (Being) In Love (2) Mood (2) Being Strong (2) Joy (3) Friendship (1) Appreciating/Loving A Country (2) Making Love (3)	Reflective	Utopic	19
Art and Artefacts (24)	Music/Song (4) Art (2) Artwork/Piece Of Art (3) Artist (2) Musician (3) Monument (2) Musical Instrument (8)	Ludic	Visceral	24
People (11)	Friend (3) Relative (1) Assistant (2) Woman (3) Stylist (1) Actor (1)	Practical	Behavioural	8
		Ludic	Visceral	3
Nature and Animals (7)	Ladybug (3) Horse (1) Rainbow (1) Nest (1) Dog (1)	Reflective	Utopic	1
		Practical	Behavioural	6
Fight and Combat (5)	Shield (2) Bunker (1) Armour (2)	Practical	Behavioural	5
Actions and Dynamics (9)	Risking Life (2) Time Travelling (1) Winning (3) Living A Day (2) Being Special (1)	Utopic	Reflective	9
Health (7)	Stimulant (3) Drug (2) Tranquillizer (2)	Utopic	Reflective	7

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Commodities (14)	TV (5) Suit/Tuxedo (3) Laundry Machine (2) Swimming Pool (1) Puppet/Doll (3)	Ludic	Visceral	9
		Rest		5
Other (19)	Devil/Angel (2) Paradise (2) Right (3) Money Saver (2) Room (1) Time/Historical Period (2) Freedom (2) Power (2) Human Sense (2) Instinct (1)	Critical		4
		Ludic	Visceral	2
		Practical	Behavioural	4
		Utopic	Reflective	7
		Rest		2

Table 3. Styles of consumption and their features dimensions

Styles of Consumption	**Practical-Behavioural (PB)**	**Utopic-Reflective (UR)**	**Critical (CR)**	**Ludic-Visceral (LV)**	**Rest**
Main features of the style	- Utility - Practical Aspects	- Self-image - Identity	- Cost - Cost / Benefits	- Appearance - Non-practical Aspects	Rest
Dimensions associated to the styles	- Comfort - Performance - Easy To Drive - Reliability - Security - Customization	- Tradition - Innovation - Uniqueness - Personality - Feelings - Mood - Cultural Knowledge	- Convenience - Saving Promotions - Fuel Consumption	- Prestige - Style - Luxury - Taste - Social Impact	Rest

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